

*Kent, NY* – Congressman John Hall announced that he has identified \$400,000 for a new Kent Senior Center to replace the funds that failed to come through when the 109th Congress adjourned last year without passing three major appropriations bills. The generous financial assistance will come from the Dyson Foundation. Hall, who made his announcement at the Kent Town Hall, was joined by Robert R. Dyson, president of the Millbrook, NY-based Dyson Foundation, local elected officials and senior citizens. The much-needed center plans will now receive the full amount of funding local officials had thought they were getting from the federal government, but it will come instead from the private Dyson Foundation.

“Meeting the needs of our seniors here in Kent, and around the entire country, in fact, is a responsibility that all of us should share in, and I applaud the Dyson Foundation’s willingness to provide vital support in this regard,” said Hall. “With this important grant, work on the senior center can resume, and it is hoped that in short time a brand new building for the growing senior population will be ready.”

The present senior center was outgrown long ago by the burgeoning number of seniors residing in Kent and neighboring towns, and discussion about erecting a new facility center has been ongoing for several years. The idea has always been to offer comprehensive services, such as meals and wellness programs, recreational activities and adult day care to seniors in Kent under one roof. The facilities in which these services are presently provided are strained by the large number of senior residents, and so there was tremendous disappointment earlier this year when Putnam County officials discovered that the federal grant promised to them would not be forthcoming.

Knowing that this year’s appropriations requests would be very limited because of Federal budget constraints, Hall sought help from private philanthropy for the Kent senior citizen project and found a willing ally in Rob Dyson and the Dyson Foundation. The Dyson grant is being accepted by the Friends of the Senior Citizens of Putnam County, a not-for-profit organization that was created to seek donations and grants.

“We’re greatly appreciative of the support that Congressman John Hall has provided in helping our elderly and addressing the plans for a senior center,” said William Huestis, Executive Director of the Putnam County Office for the Aging. “And it’s important to thank the Dyson Foundation, as it celebrates its 50th anniversary in offering assistance to organizations in the greater Hudson Valley and beyond. We need collaborative efforts between governments and municipalities and the private sector to address various needs in our communities, and the Dyson Foundation has long been at the forefront of this kind of civic commitment.”

Added Putnam County Executive Robert Bondi: “During these challenging fiscal times, Putnam County appreciates this effort to provide funding so that we can build a facility that will serve our aging population.”